**INTRODUCTION**

The Community Math Academy is the most unique and cutting-edge math organization in the state of North Carolina. It was founded and birthed in 2008 in Shelby, NC to support the Close the Gap Initiative in Cleveland County. Test scores evidenced a significant gap between minorities and other ethnic groups. We have been working together with our public and private partners for 13 years. The Community Math Academy was birthed and founded in 2008 by community leaders who became aware of the enormous minority academic gap in Cleveland County schools. It was these revelations that moved them to create a program that would support students struggling in math and decrease the academic gap.

It is our purpose to help students develop a positive attitude toward math, increase their math skills and increase their math concepts. Over the past thirteen years the CMA has served over 2000 Cleveland County students ranging from rising 3rd graders to rising 8th graders. The initiative was born from a desire to improve classroom and grade level performance.

The CMA is held for three weeks during the summer (Prior to COVID199We intend to return to face-to-face 2022) and is staffed by certified teachers, social workers and principals. Students selected are those in which Cleveland County School staff, not CMA; determines are struggling in math, as well as, advanced math opportunities. These scholars are a very diverse group, and to date 87.1%-90% are from families that participate in the free and reduced lunch program, and some are considered homeless.

Family Engagement sessions are planned for parents. These sessions empower parents to take charge in their students’ educational lives, as the Math Academy is based on engagement and holds high expectations for students and families.

Since its beginning, an additional week for students to participate in enrichment camps include Robotics, Science and Physics and Coding. Parents are supportive and take an active role in the participation of their children during enrichment camps.

With assistance from Cleveland County Cooperative Extension and with produce donated from Cleveland County local farmers, 5th and 6th grade students create a “mock market” with a given budget. Our 5th and 6th grade students purchase items, assemble baskets, and deliver the LOVE BASKETS to food distribution centers and agencies within the county as a “Giving Back to the Community” effort. This program teaches children about budgeting, buying in quantity, and assigning a dollar value to what they buy. 3rd and 4th graders collect canned goods as a part of their” Giving Back to the Community”. In 2019, more than 1550 cans were collected to distribute to areas in need throughout Cleveland County.



 